

MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

COUNSELING PROGRAM



Missouri StateTM
U N I V E R S I T Y

Annual Report

Calendar Year 2023

Dr. Bridger Dale Falkenstien, CACREP Liaison
Dr. Jeffrey H. D. Cornelius-White, Program Director
Ms. Lauren Hembree, Practicum & Internship Coordinator



Missouri State[™]

U N I V E R S I T Y

Master of Science in Counseling

The Master of Science in Counseling Program's 2023 Annual Report

This report contains an overview of the Master of Science in Counseling (MSC) Program, including data from courses, survey data, faculty information, and program data as outlined in the Counseling Assessment Plan (CAP) for the MSC Program. As part of the Program's ongoing comprehensive evaluation efforts, this report includes updates, summary data, findings from the CAP, and program modifications made as a result of these findings and personnel changes.

Getting to Know the MSC Program

MSC Program Summary

The Counseling program grants a Master of Science degree in Counseling with options in School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling, each requiring 60-credit hours of course work for completion. The School Counseling (SC) program is designed to fulfill the professional counseling course requirements for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DES) K-12 school counseling certification in the State of Missouri. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program is designed to fulfill the professional counseling course requirements for licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of Missouri. The LPC designation also requires 3,000 hours of additional post-master's supervised experience. To ensure optimal placement potential and the highest quality of education standards, both concentrations are designed to meet the national academic and field placement standards set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program (CACREP) and their latest standards.

MSC Mission Statement

The mission of the Counseling Program is to provide high quality curricular and clinical experiences for graduate students in the counseling profession, leading to eligibility for certification and licensure as professional counselors. We aim to develop competent and ethical counseling practitioners who have a deep level of self-understanding, to work effectively with diverse clients in a variety of settings to facilitate the dignity, well-being, and potential of all people. Students graduate with knowledge and skills in core competency areas that include professional identity, social and cultural foundations, human growth and development, career development, helping relationships, group work, assessment, research, and program evaluation.

To fulfill this mission, the Counseling Program facilitates a course catalogue designed from the eight core curriculum areas and two specialized application areas of CACREP and DESE. The

curricular objectives are arranged according to these areas and incorporate requirements from the latest CACREP and DESE guidelines. The core areas address both cognitive acquisitions (knowledge) and skill attainment. Experiences are organized to provide introduction, essential practice, and mastery of critical concepts and skills. Below are the objectives designed for the program based on our mission statement and CACREP standards.

- **Knowledge:** Students will demonstrate appropriate breadth and depth of knowledge and comprehension in the areas of culturally relevant service, prevention, treatment, referral, and program management associated with the broader field of counseling as well as the selected specialty (i.e., clinical mental health or school counseling).
- **Clinical Skills:** Students will demonstrate meaningful, therapeutic alliances that utilize culturally sensitive appraisal and assessment techniques for working with individuals and groups in a culturally pluralistic world.
- **Research and Appraisal:** Students will demonstrate analytical knowledge and skills for appraising and contributing to professional counseling literature and program evaluation in selected specialty areas (i.e., clinical mental health or school counseling).
- **Professional Dispositions:** Students will conduct themselves in accordance with the highest ethical standards and values of professional counseling and develop an understanding of oneself and the use of self in the counseling process.
- **Specialty Areas:** Students will demonstrate appropriate breadth and depth of knowledge and skills in their respective specialty areas (i.e., clinical mental health or school counseling).

Program Updates

Spring 2023 marked a season of meaningful transitions for the program. We said goodbye to two deeply valued core faculty members, Marjorie Shavers and Kelli Lettieri, whose contributions left a lasting impact on students and colleagues alike. During this same period, the Practicum/Internship (P/I) Coordinator role transitioned from Amy Chenoweth to Charlie Myers, ensuring continued support and guidance for students in their clinical training. That spring, we also received exciting news: the program was approved for a CACREP site visit, which was ultimately scheduled for late Fall 2023, allowing us time to thoughtfully prepare and present the strengths of our program.

In Fall 2023, a major structural shift occurred as the program officially moved from the College of Education (COE) to the McQueary College of Health and Human Services (MCHHS). This transition brought fresh opportunities for collaboration and alignment within the health and human services disciplines, while also inviting us to navigate new systems and expectations together. As the year came to a close, we honored the dedicated service of long-time clinic director Robyn Fondren, who stepped down in December 2023. Robyn's leadership was instrumental in shaping the clinic over the years, and their departure marked an important moment of transition for the center. Throughout the year, we also experienced changes in administrative support. Though Lisa Monkres officially ended her clerical role in August 2023, her absence was felt well into the fall semester. In response, Kelli Helton and Jacqueline Patterson joined us in part-time support roles, helping to carry forward vital operations as we adjusted to a new rhythm.

Behind the scenes, the team remained committed to enhancing our infrastructure, including technology systems, storage solutions, assessment processes, and communication workflows in the clinic. These efforts laid the groundwork for continued improvement and integration as we moved into 2024.

Applicant and Enrollment Data

Academic Year 2023

The Counseling Program's application process is able to track students who begin the application process, those who complete the application process, which student applications are denied, or an offer is made for their acceptance. This process allows the program faculty to provide feedback internally to inform admission decisions and adjust admission practices to support applicant wellbeing and faculty cohesion. In 2023, 378 applications were initiated with 106 applications completed and considered for admission (28%). Of these 106 completed applications, 49 applicants received an offer from the program for admission (46%). Received throughout the academic year, students are able to submit their applications for admission for both the Fall and Spring semester. In the Spring, there were 8 CMHC and 2 SC students admitted. In the Fall, there were 29 CMHC and 8 SC students admitted. Taken together, of the 49 applicants who received an offer for admission, 47 students ultimately completed admission and enrollment.

Demographic Data for Applicants

Race/Ethnicity						Gender		
Hispanic/ Latino	Multicultural	Black/AA	Native American/ Alaskan Native	AAPI	White	Female	Male	GNC/ Transgender
7	7	18	1	6	68	80	26	1

A total of 106 prospective students applied to the MSC program in 2023. The reported ethnicity and gender of the applicant pool was majority white (64%) and female (75%). The program continues to explore ways to support and enroll underrepresented students, consistent with the Counseling Assessment Plan (CAP). The applicant pool ethnic diversity included White (64%), Black/African American (17%), Hispanic/Latino (7%), Multicultural (7%), Asian (6%), and Native American/Alaskan Native (>1%), with 75% identifying as female, 24.5 % as male, and one applicant who identified as transgender.

Demographic Data for Enrolled Students

Race/Ethnicity						Gender		
Hispanic/ Latino	Multicultural	Black/AA	Native American/ Alaskan Native	AAPI	White	Female	Male	GNC/ Transgender
5	5	5	1	0	37	42	4	1

The total enrollment for the 2023 academic year was 47 students. Similar to the application data, the majority of enrolled students were White (79%) and female (89%). The enrollment pool ethnic diversity include White (79%), Black/African American (11%), Hispanic/Latino (11%), Multicultural (11%), and Native American/Alaskan Native (>1%), with 89 % identifying as female, 9% identifying as male, and one enrolled student who identified as transgender.

Evaluating Program Objectives

The Counseling Assessment Plan (CAP) is an ongoing assessment and evaluation of the program, its practices, and its policies. The CAP details the evaluation process, and guides faculty interpretation for program development and improvement including its inputs, activities, recipients, outcomes, and impacts. Designed to optimize student success, faculty development and wellbeing, and program development, the following data sources contribute to the evaluation:

- Key Performance Indicator Data (evaluating Student Learning Outcomes)
- Exit Survey (for Graduating Students)
- Program Evaluation Survey from Site Supervisors
- Alumni Data
- Employer Placement Data
- Site Visit Feedback (Practicum and Internship)
- Student Evaluations (Annual and Responsive)
- Comprehensive Test Scores (CECE and NCE)

Designed to facilitate student development, *Student Learning Outcomes* (SLOs) have been created to guide curricular activities and course design in adherence with the latest CACREP and DESE standards. SLOs are measured through survey and observation as well as an individual student's performance in a course with a designated *Key Performance Indicator* (KPI) that links student performance and development to the program's intended SLOs and the program objectives for evaluation. Presented below is a table reflecting the SLOs and their linked KPIs and measurement points.

Student Performance Evaluation		
Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	Key Performance Indicator	Measurements
SLO1. Students will understand and adhere to ethical standards of professional counseling organizations	Students will understand and apply the ethical standards of professional counseling organizations	Ethical Decision-Making Model, CECE Comprehensive Examination

SLO2. Students will attain multicultural counseling competencies and skills for creating therapeutic relationships with diverse clientele	Students will recall and model multicultural counseling competencies in all aspects of their counseling work.	Diversity Foundations Collection, CECE Comprehensive Exam
SLO3. Students will be able to determine the unique needs of individuals at all developmental levels and select relevant prevention and treatment strategies for addressing those needs.	Students will recall and apply theories of individual and family development for creating differentiated interventions.	Human Growth Conceptualization Paper, CECE Comprehensive Examination
SLO4. Students will understand career development and make use of career theories, assessments, and career resources.	Students will understand and use theories of career development to assist with career development, planning, and counseling.	College & Career Autobiography, CECE Comprehensive Exam
SLO5. Students will understand and apply counseling theory, skills, and interventions for enhancing the counseling relationship.	Students will recall and demonstrate knowledge of counseling theories, techniques, and skills to establish and maintain effective counseling relationships.	Counseling Skills section of the Performance Fitness Evaluation (PFE) in Helping Relationships and Lab, Practicum, and Internship, CECE Comprehensive Exam.
SLO6. Students will be able to identify the process of group development and facilitate therapeutic or psychoeducational groups.	Students will understand and demonstrate group work including theories, group dynamics and techniques, and skills necessary to effectively facilitate group counseling.	Group Manual Assignment, CECE Comprehensive Exam
SLO7. Students will know how to ethically utilize group and individual assessment applicable to either school counseling or mental health	Students will recognize and demonstrate the ability to use assessment results to assist clients and/or students.	Diagnostic Evaluation Report, CECE Comprehensive Exam

counseling.		
SLO8. Students will be able to apply the evidentiary hierarchy for appraising research and selecting evidence-based practices.	Students will identify and evaluate research to inform effective counseling practices.	Seminar Paper or Thesis, CECE Comprehensive Exam.
SLO9. Students will demonstrate professional dispositions relevant to professional counseling.	Students will demonstrate personal and interpersonal processes as well as professional dispositions inherent in becoming an effective, reflective counseling practitioner.	Professional Dispositions and Social-Emotional Maturity & Integrity and Ethical Standards PDME section of the Performance Fitness Evaluation (PFE)
School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Specialty Areas		
School Counseling Specialty Students will be able to identify and evaluate an ethical comprehensive school program.	Students will understand and demonstrate utilization of an ethical comprehensive school counseling program, including the application of the ACA and ASCA codes of ethics.	School Counselor Interview, MSCE Summative Data: Site Supervisor, MSCE Summative Data: University Supervisor.
Clinical Mental Health Students will be able to develop a culturally relevant, ethical treatment plan.	Students will conceptualize and apply an ethical counseling approach for working effectively with clientele from diverse backgrounds.	Case Conceptualization Presentation (CCP), Ethical Decision-Making Model (EDMM)

Presented below is a summary of the program objects and the information used to evaluate them over the academic year.

Program Objective 1. Knowledge

This objective is measured using SLO 2-4, and 6, and their associated KPIs. These KPIs are evaluated by program faculty using a 1-3 scale where 1 = Inadequate, 2 = Proficient, and 3 = Exceptional. Additionally, several subscales of the Counselor Education Comprehensive Exam (CECE) are devoted to this Program Objective. Presented below is a review of how students

scored on each SLO and a report on the relevant subscales of the CECE.

SLO2

To evaluate this outcome, students complete the ***Key Performance Indicator (KPI): Diversity Foundations Collection*** in their early coursework. This portfolio-based assessment invites students to reflect deeply on their own cultural identities, explore systemic issues related to oppression and privilege, and develop a personal philosophy of culturally responsive counseling. In 2023, the scoring distribution for this KPI revealed that 98% ($N = 37$) of students received a Proficient rating, and 2.6% ($N = 1$) received an Inadequate rating.

SLO3

Evaluation of this outcome is based on the students' completion of the ***KPI: Human Growth Conceptualization Paper***, where they apply developmental theories to real or hypothetical clinical cases. This assignment allows students to demonstrate their ability to think critically about how age, life stage, and family dynamics inform treatment planning and prevention strategies. In 2023, the scoring distribution for this KPI revealed that 55% ($N = 26$) of students received a Proficient rating, and 45% ($N = 21$) received an Exceptional rating.

SLO4

This outcome is evaluated through the ***KPI: College & Career Autobiography***, a reflective assignment that asks them to trace their own educational and vocational development using the career theories they're learning. This project fosters a personal connection to the material, allowing students to integrate theory with lived experience – an essential step in being able to offer meaningful career guidance to others. In 2023, the scoring distribution for this KPI revealed that 93% ($N = 14$) of students received an Exceptional rating, and 6% ($N = 1$) received a Proficient rating.

SLO6

To ensure both conceptual knowledge and practical application, students are evaluated using two key performance indicators. First, students complete a ***KPI: Group Manual Assignment***, which requires them to design a comprehensive group counseling experience. This assignment serves as a capstone to their didactic learning and allows for thoughtful integration of both clinical and logistical considerations. Second, students are observed and evaluated during their actual ***KPI: Group Facilitation*** experiences, wherein they co-lead a counseling or psychoeducational group and are rated on core group leadership competencies. In 2023, the scoring distribution for the first KPI revealed that 79% ($N = 22$) of students received an Exceptional rating, and 21% ($N = 6$) received a Proficient rating. The scoring distribution for the second KPI revealed that 61% ($N = 17$) of students received an Exceptional rating, and 39% ($N = 11$) received a Proficient rating.

Summary

Results for Program Objective 1: Knowledge reflects a strong integration of academic

knowledge, self-reflection, and applied clinical skills. Students consistently demonstrated Proficient to Exceptional performance across all KPIs, indicating readiness to serve diverse communities with insight and professionalism. These results affirm both the strength of the curriculum and our ongoing commitment to preparing thoughtful, well-informed counselors.

Program Objective 2. Clinical Skills

This objective is measured using SLO 5. Students are evaluated on this SLO at three different points throughout the program, giving them time to demonstrate their skills, receive detailed feedback from their program faculty and supervisors, and implement that feedback. The measure used to evaluate this SLO is the Performance Fitness Evaluation (PFE) which is comprised of three domains: A) Professional Dispositions and Social Emotional Maturity, B) Integrity and Ethical Standards, and C) Counseling Skills. These domains are comprised of several questions, each using a 4-point Likert Scale where 1 = Below Expectation, 2 = Needs Improvement, 3 = Meets Expectation, and 4 = Exceeds Expectation. In order to evaluate this Program Objective, Section C of the PFE is summated to create an average score for each student at different measurement points including in Helping Skills (COU 710/711), Counseling Practicum (COU 777), and Counseling Internship which is specific to the specialty area of the student (Clinical Mental Health or School Counseling). Below is a summary of Section C for Helping Skills and Practicum.

Helping Skills (COU 710/711)

In 2023, the scoring distribution for Section C of the PFE in Helping Skills revealed an average score of 3.01 ($N = 46$), Meets Expectations. Upon further inquiry, 12 students scored below Meets Expectations and of these 12 students, only four scored below 2.7 indicating several areas of skill development need improvement. For some of these students, additional recommendations were made for ongoing development, and several were required to retake the course in a subsequent semester. Additionally, 13 students scored above 3.1, indicating several areas of skill development were exceptionally strong for these students.

Counseling Practicum (COU 777)

In 2023, the scoring distribution for Section C of the PFE in Counseling Practicum revealed an average score of 3.65 ($N = 17$). No student received a score below “Meets Expectations” on any question in the domain, and 10 of the 17 students had an average score higher than 3.7, indicating several areas of skill development were exceptionally strong for these students.

Summary

These data illustrate a clear developmental progression in students’ counseling skills, with most demonstrating strong proficiency and many reaching levels of exceptional competency by the time they enter clinical fieldwork. The Performance Fitness Evaluation offers a robust and relationally grounded framework for assessing students’ growth across multiple domains, and the consistent improvement between helping skills and Practicum suggests that students are

integrating feedback and deepening their therapeutic presence overtime.

Program Objective 3. *Research and Appraisal*

This objective is measured using SLO 7 and 8 and their associated KPIs. These KPIs are evaluated by program faculty using a 1-3 scale where 1 = Inadequate, 2 = Proficient, and 3 = Exceptional. Important to note, the classes where these SLOs are facilitated are on a two-year cycle, making data collection rich in some years and sparse in others. SLO 7 is measured in COU 724 Assessment and Diagnosis and COU 701 Assessment and Testing for Counselors. Below is a summary of the KPI's for COU 724 and 701.

Assessment and Diagnosis (COU 724)

In 2023, the average score on the Diagnostic Evaluation Report KPI was 2.26, *Proficient* ($N = 18$). No student fell below proficient on this KPI in this Academic Year, meaning each student was able to synthesize client symptoms and history to provide a diagnosis and adequately engage in differential diagnosis processing.

Assessment and Testing for Counselors (COU 701)

In 2023, the average score on the Test, Administration, Results & Feedback was 2, *Proficient* ($N = 19$). No student fell below Proficient on this KPI in this Academic Year, meaning each student was able to interpret and synthesize test results and provide feedback and recommendations in their practice.

SLO 8 is measured in COU 794 Introduction to Research and Program Evaluation in Counseling, as well as on the research subscale of the CECE. We do not have any scoring to report on this SLO in this Academic Year.

Summary

These data indicate that students are consistently meeting program expectations in the domains of assessment, diagnosis, and testing. In both COU 724 and COU 701, all students achieved a level of proficiency or higher, with average scores well within the “Proficient” range. This suggests that students are effectively synthesizing client history and symptomatology, engaging in differential diagnosis, and demonstrating competency in test administration, interpretation, and feedback. Although no data are available for SLO 8 in this Academic Year, the findings from SLO 7 reflect a solid foundation in core assessment competencies that are essential for both clinical practice and research readiness. Taken together, these results demonstrate that students are progressing toward advanced competence in the integration of diagnostic reasoning and assessment practices, with the expectation that future data cycles will continue to capture their growth in research and program evaluation.

Program Objective 4. *Professional Dispositions*

This objective is measured alongside Program Objective 2 at three different points throughout the program using the Performance Fitness Evaluation (PFE). This Program Objective focuses on domain A of the PFE, Professional Dispositions and Social Emotional Maturity.

Helping Skills (COU710/711)

In 2023, the scoring distribution for Section A of the PFE in Helping Skills revealed an average score of 2.99 ($N = 46$), Meets Expectations. Upon further inquiry, 12 students scored below Meets Expectations and of these 12 students, only four scored below 2.7 indicating several areas of skill development need improvement. For some of these students, additional recommendations were made for ongoing development, and several were required to retake the course in a subsequent semester. Additionally, five students scored above 3.1, indicating several areas of skill development were exceptionally strong for these students.

Counseling Practicum (COU 777)

In 2023, the scoring distribution for Section A of the PFE in Counseling Practicum revealed an average score of 3.7 ($N = 17$). No student received a score below “Meets Expectations” on any question in the domain, and 12 of the 17 students had an average score higher than 3.7, indicating several areas of skill development were exceptionally strong for these students.

Summary

These data illustrate a clear developmental progression in students’ counseling skills, with most demonstrating strong proficiency and many reaching levels of exceptional competency by the time they enter clinical fieldwork. The Performance Fitness Evaluation offers a robust and relationally grounded framework for assessing students’ growth across multiple domains, and the consistent improvement between helping skills and Practicum suggests that students are integrating feedback and deepening their therapeutic presence overtime.

Program Objective 5. Specialty Areas

This objective is measured through two unique learning outcomes optimized for the school counseling and clinical mental health counseling tracks. Each SLO is measured throughout the program at various points. School Counseling students are evaluated on this SLO in COU 704 Introduction to School Counseling, COU 781 Secondary school Counseling, and COU 783 Elementary School Counseling. Clinical Mental Health Counseling students are evaluated on this SLO in COU 703 Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice in School and Mental Health Counseling, and COU 785 Mental Health Counseling Internship. Below is a summary for each specialty area and the student level data for each KPI.

School Counseling

In COU 704 Introduction to School Counseling, the average score on the KPI was 2.9, *Proficient*

($N = 15$). No student fell below Proficient on this KPI in this Academic Year, meaning each student could explain and display components of a comprehensive school counseling program. COU 781, 783, 789 and the Missouri School Counselor Candidate Assessment data was not recoverable for this academic year due to data storage challenges. We have implemented processes to remedy these issues in future reporting years by standardizing our data collection and assessment process into Tevera, our current long-term data storage system. However, for students who completed the Missouri School Counselors Exam (MSCE; $N = 6$), the average score was 34.6, *Emerging*.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

For Clinical Mental Health Counseling students, this objective is measured in COU 703 Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice in School and Mental Health Counseling and COU 785 Mental Health Counseling Internship. At this time, program faculty have been largely unable to retrieve complete KPI data for either course in the current Academic Year due to inconsistencies in storage and reporting processes. To ensure more accurate and reliable assessment in the future, we have implemented standardized procedures for data collection and migration into Tevera, our long-term data management system. These steps will allow for consistent tracking of Clinical Mental Health Counseling student outcomes and more comprehensive reporting in subsequent annual reviews. However, COU 785 Mental Health Counseling Internship students from Spring 2023 were successfully measured. For these students, the average KPI score was 2.8, *Proficient*. This means that students were able to demonstrate proficiency in their counseling skills during their internship.

National Counseling Exam

Through our commitment to preparing competent and credential-ready counseling professionals, we closely monitor student performance on national licensure and certification examinations. These exams serve as a critical benchmark for assessing students' readiness to enter the field and uphold the standards of the Counseling Profession.

Each year, a subset of graduating students sits for the National Counselor Examination (NCE) or other qualifying exams required for state licensure or national certification. The results of these exams provide valuable feedback about the alignment between our curriculum and the broader competencies expected of entry-level counselors. Presented below are the exam pass rates of the number of students who completed the national counseling exam during the 2023 academic year.

27 students registered for the NCE in 2023 and 26 passed, reflecting a 96% pass rate for the counseling program in 2023.

Exit Survey

Graduating students are invited to complete an exit survey assessing their perceptions of the program's effectiveness in preparing them for professional practice. The survey includes statements related to core counseling competencies, ethical and professional development, theoretical knowledge, multicultural competence, clinical skills, and specialty-specific

preparation. Students rate each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). There is then a qualitative feedback section consisting of three questions to make space for students to reflect on the strengths and growth areas of the program and their experience with us.

Quantitative Results

Across all items and students ($N = 15$), the average score was 4.45, indicating a strong overall agreement that the MSU Counseling Program effectively prepares students for professional success from the student perspective. Several areas stood out with particularly high scores, including:

- Professional Dispositions and Ethics (avg. 4.7)
- Multicultural Counseling Competencies (avg. 4.7)
- Counseling Theory and Skills (avg. 4.7)
- Specialty Area Preparation (avg. 4.6)

The area with the lowest average score was related to career development (avg. 3.5), suggesting an opportunity for deeper integration or increased student confidence in this area. Similarly, the school counseling-specific item averaged 3.1, though this reflects a small sample and may indicate a need for further inquiry into specialty-specific training perceptions.

Qualitative Feedback

Students consistently highlighted the supportive, knowledgeable, and caring faculty as the program's greatest strength. Many reflected on the transformative impact of faculty mentorship and praised the accessibility of some professors, the modeling of authentic counseling relationships, and the emotional safety created in the learning environment. Cohort connection was also emphasized as a key part of the student experience, with several students noting the sense of life-long community and mutual support that developed through their time in the program. Additionally, students appreciated the program's emphasis on cultural humility, trauma-informed care, and neuroscience informed learning material, noting that these themes shaped their identities as counselors and as individuals. Several pointed to the breadth of coursework, access to real-life clinical experiences through the Center City Counseling Clinic, and preparation for the NCE as meaningful aspects of their training. The inclusion of introspective learning opportunities was also named as a vital part of their development, particularly in early courses related to diversity, assessment, and helping relationships.

The most cited area for improvement was specific to program communication and organizational cohesion. Students shared some frustrations related to unclear guidance on tasks like NCE registration, PLPC application procedures, and course planning. Many expressed inconsistent information, difficulty reaching faculty or advisors, and a lack of centralized communication increased stress during critical transition points in the program. Students also named a need for greater alignment and clarity across faculty, improved registration processes, and more cohesive support structures during practicum and internships placements.

Despite noted challenges, many students expressed deep gratitude for their time in the program.

Words like “honor,” “grateful,” “loved,” and “thankful” appeared frequently. Several students acknowledged the impact of recent program transitions and recognized that some of the growing pains were likely related to those changes. Others voiced appreciation for the personal and professional growth they experienced and shared hope that the program continues to evolve while maintaining its relational heart.